

## Message Text

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71

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ARA-11 ADP-00 IO-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 RSR-01 /114 W

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R 241645 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1459

INFO AMCONSUL NASSAU

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 06131

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINS, BF, UK

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER PINDLING' S VISIT TO LONDON RE

ABACO

REF: NASSAU 663

1. FCO ASST UNDER SECTY NICHOLAS LARMOUR, WHO HEADED RECENT BRITISH DELEGATION TO THE BAHAMAS FOR INDEPENDENCE TALKS, TOLD EMBOFF THAT PINDLING' S VISIT TO LONDON EARLY LAST WEEK HAD ENDED ON AN AMICABLE NOTE MUCH TO THE RELIEF OF HMG. PINDLING HAD INSISTED ON COMING IN PERSON TO DISCUSS ABACO PROBLEM AND BRUSHED ASIDE BRITISH SUGGESTIONS THAT HE SEND ADDERLEY OR SOMEONE ELSE. HE HAD INITIALLY WANTED TO SIT IN GALLERY DURING READING OF BAHAMAS INDEPENDENCE BILL IN COMMONS IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE HIS PERSONAL CONCERN THAT BILL BE ENACTED AS PRESENTED BY GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, BRITISH FINALLY PERSUADED HIM NOT TO ATTEND, FEARING THAT HIS PRESENCE WOULD BE NOTED AND WOULD STIMULATE CERTAIN MP' S TO RAISE ISSUE OF ABACO DURING DEBATE. END RESULT WAS THAT, ALTHOUGH PINDLING DID EXPRESS HIS CONCERN TO LORD BALNIEL, HE DID NOT PRESS HMG VERY HARD ON THIS SUBJECT AND SEEMED TO BE SATISFIED THAT PREPARATIONS FOR INDEPENDENCE WERE MOVING SATISFACTORILY.

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2. LARMOUR SAID HE HAD ASKED PINDLING ABOUT PROBLEM OF BASES AND PINDLING ASSERTED THAT HE HAD NO CONCERN WHATSOEVER ON THIS SCORE. PINDLING ALSO SAID THAT HE WOULD NOT BE CONCERNED IF BRITISH TEAM FOR FINAL ROUND OF TALKS IN BAHAMAS TO BEGIN JUNE 11 OR 12 WERE TO BE LED BY SOMEONE BELOW MINISTERIAL RANK. (BALNIEL HAD EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT HE HIMSELF WOULD BE ABLE TO HEAD BRITISH DELEGATION.) LARMOUR NOW BELIEVES THAT, AT LEAST FROM BRITISH POINT OF VIEW, THERE ARE NO DIFFICULT HURDLES REMAINING BEFORE THE DATE FOR BAHAMAIAN INDEPENDENCE ARRIVES. HE ALSO SAID THAT BAHAMAIS HAD BEEN EXTREMELY IMPRESSED WITH PRESENTATION MADE BY US MILITARY REPRESENTATIVES DESCRIBING ACTIVITIES AT BAHAMA BASES. SOME OF HIS OPTIMISM ABOUT FUTURE PROGRESS TOWARD SETTLEMENT OF OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN BASED ON AN ASSESSMENT THAT ASTUTE HANDLING OF THE BASES ISSUE BY US HAD SWEEPED AWAY BAHAMAIAN LEADERS' SUSPICIONS.

3. COMMENT: WORTH NOTING THAT LARMOUR HAS ONLY RECENTLY BECOME DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN BAHAMA INDEPENDENCE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH COULD HAVE HAD BEARING ON HIS PROGNOSTICATION OF SMOOTH SAILING. SHOULD ALSO BE RECORDED THAT ABOVE CONVERSATION TOOK PLACE IN CONVIVIAL ATMOSPHERE OF THE CONNAUGHT BAR.

ANNENBERG

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NMAFVVZCZ

\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* CONFIDENTIAL

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 24 MAY 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** golinofr  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** XGDS-1  
**Errors:** n/a  
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**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
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**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 73 NASSAU 663  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** golinofr  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 07 AUG 2001  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <07-Aug-2001 by boyleja>; APPROVED <05-Feb-2002 by golinofr>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
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**TAGS:** PINS, BF, UK  
**To:** EUR  
NASSAU  
SECSTATE WASHDC  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005